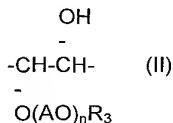


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds of the general formula RY (I), where R is a substituted aliphatic group containing 1-3 structure elements of the formula

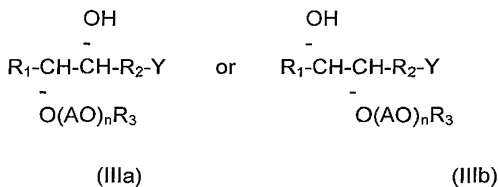


where the carbon atoms shown in the structure element are part of the aliphatic carbon skeleton of group R, which contains 8-24 carbon atoms, and Y is a nitrile ~~or an amide~~ group; R₃ is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30.

- 2-10. **Previously Deleted.**

11. **(Previously Added)** Nonionic compounds of claim 1 containing 1-2 structure elements according to formula (II).

12. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds of the general formulae



where R₁ is an aliphatic group, R₂ is an aliphatic radical, the sum of carbon atoms contained in R₁ and R₂ is between 9 and 19; Y is a nitrile ~~or an amide~~ group; R₃ is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30.

13. **(Previously Added)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 1 where at least 50% of the AO groups are ethyleneoxy groups.
14. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 2 11 where at least 50% of the AO groups are ethyleneoxy groups.
15. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 3 12 where at least 50% of the AO groups are ethyleneoxy groups.
16. **(Previously Amended)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 1 where the AO group is the ethyleneoxy group.
17. **(Currently Added)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 2 11 where the AO group is the ethyleneoxy group.
18. **(Currently Amended)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 3 12 where the AO group is the ethyleneoxy group.
19. **(Previously Added)** Nonionic compounds according to claim 1 where n is 3-20 and R₃ is methyl or ethyl.
20. **Currently Deleted.**
21. **Currently Deleted.**
22. **(Previously Added)** A method of producing the polyoxyalkylene nonionic ~~compound of claim 1~~ compounds which comprises
- a) reacting an epoxidised nitrile containing 1-3 epoxy groups and a total of 8 to 24 carbon atoms with an alkyl blocked polyalkylene glycol having the formula R₃O(AO)_nH, where R₃ is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group

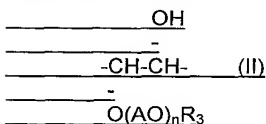
containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30, in the presence of a catalyst, and optionally subjecting the product obtained to alkaline hydrogen peroxide.

23. **Currently Deleted.**

24. **(Currently Amended)** A surfactant composition which comprises an a cleaning effective amount of at least one non-ionic compound of claim 1.

25. **(Currently Amended)** The surfactant composition of claim ~~23~~ 24 adapted for the cleaning of hard surfaces, vehicle cleaning, bottle cleaning, machine dishwashing or machine washing of textiles.

26. **(Currently Added)** A method of producing nonionic compounds of the general formula RY (I), where R is a substituted aliphatic group containing 1-3 structure elements of the formula



where the carbon atoms shown in the structure element are part of the aliphatic carbon skeleton of group R, which contains 8-24 carbon atoms, and Y is a nitrile or an amide group; R₃ is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30, said method comprising:

reacting an epoxidised nitrile containing 1-3 epoxy groups and a total of 8 to 24 carbon atoms with an alkyl blocked polyalkylene glycol having the formula R₃O(AO)_nH, where R₃ is an alkyl group with 1-4 carbon atoms; AO is an alkyleneoxy group containing 2-4 carbon atoms and n is a number between 1 and 30, in the presence of a catalyst, and optionally subjecting the product obtained to alkaline hydrogen peroxide.

27. (Currently Added) A nonionic compound produced by the method of claim 26.

28. (Currently Added) A surfactant composition which comprises a cleaning effective amount of at least one non-ionic compound of claim 27.

29. (Currently Added) The surfactant composition of claim 28 adapted for the cleaning of hard surfaces, vehicle cleaning, bottle cleaning, machine dishwashing or machine washing of textiles.